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LaunchByte Picks \$25,000 Winner at Excel

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LaunchByte Picks \$25,000 Winner at Excel

by Rick Winterson

Last week's first ever Student Entrepreneur Workshop at Excel High School was an exciting, remarkable event. It was sponsored by LaunchByte, an execution-focused investment firm and startup hub. Hosted by Excel's Headmaster Renee McCall, the Workshop challenged five groups of Excel students to develop their own original ideas for new, viable businesses. The five groups

were tasked with brainstorming and then designing new concepts for a marketable/saleable mobile application – which these five groups of (very) promising student entrepreneurs certainly did.

LaunchByte is a highly interesting, comparatively new firm. It was founded just over three years ago in 2015 by its CEO, Tan Kabra. Unique in its own way, LaunchByte is a startup hub that focuses on many entrepreneurial steps – seed stage, growth stage, business incubation, and necessary micro-funding. The latter item uses a proprietary method that LaunchByte calls “Reverse Angel Fund”. To state it simply, LaunchByte guides their clients from early technology development all the way through successful management of the startup and initial marketing. You can learn more about them by visiting www.LaunchByte.io.

In just a few short years, LaunchByte has enjoyed significant entrepreneurial success; they recently decided it was time to “give back”. Briefly stated, Founder and CEO Tan Kabra brought his team to Excel High in order to establish a Student Entrepreneur Workshop. Also, LaunchByte is contributing \$41,000 towards a technology wing at Excel High – mostly for computers and related equipment. To top off their generous “give-back”, LaunchByte will also develop the best idea from the Student Entrepreneur Workshop, a service worth an additional \$25,000.

In this article, South Boston Online is focusing on the final student presentations (Thursday morning, May 24) and the selection of the final winning team, who'll now receive the \$25,000 LaunchByte consultation. The LaunchByte team included CEO Kabra himself, Olivia Kanyka, David Owens, Natalie Tongprasearth, and James Zamer (who BTW is from South Boston). Each student team of entrepreneurs presented its ideas and was then closely questioned by the LaunchByte professionals. We can only briefly present the students' ideas. But, every one of them was excellent.

The first team came up with an app that furnishes daily diaries of what to wear, including drawings, current fashions, and even weather-based recommendations. Next, a proposal for interactive electronic management of accounts and the moneys in them was presented. The third idea, called “MediKit”, was a sensor-based monitor of health data that could reduce in-person visits to clinics and even predict health problems. Then, a student team presented an app that aids athletes, who qualify for collegiate athletic scholarships, in selecting the right/best college for them. The fi

and final student team's idea was an app that matches job applicants with the optimum work openings, including appropriate wording for resumes and so on.

The LaunchByte team then went to work on selecting the best idea. An audible buzz filled the Library where the presentations had taken place, as the excitement and anticipation built up. The chosen best: "NLA", the fourth student team, who had developed the app for effectively placing college athletes. The team members: Joseph Roque, Wilson Sanon, and Carlos Goncalves. There were whoops of joy and vocal congratulations. The key characteristic that got the nod for NLA was something called "scalability", which means their athletic placement app could rapidly go viral nationwide, and perhaps even worldwide. "Scalability" is an advantage possessed by firms like Apple, Walmart, Facebook, and Google (Alphabet).

LaunchByte certainly sponsored a memorable morning. Headmaster McCall said, "Today's event provided an extraordinary opportunity for our students to dream and create ..." Launchbyte CEO Tan Kabra was equally impressed – "I am astonished by the potential and drive of the students I met with today ... (We) will facilitate and accelerate student success at Excel High for years to come."

A final editorial comment: The Student Entrepreneur Workshop was education at its (very) best!

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